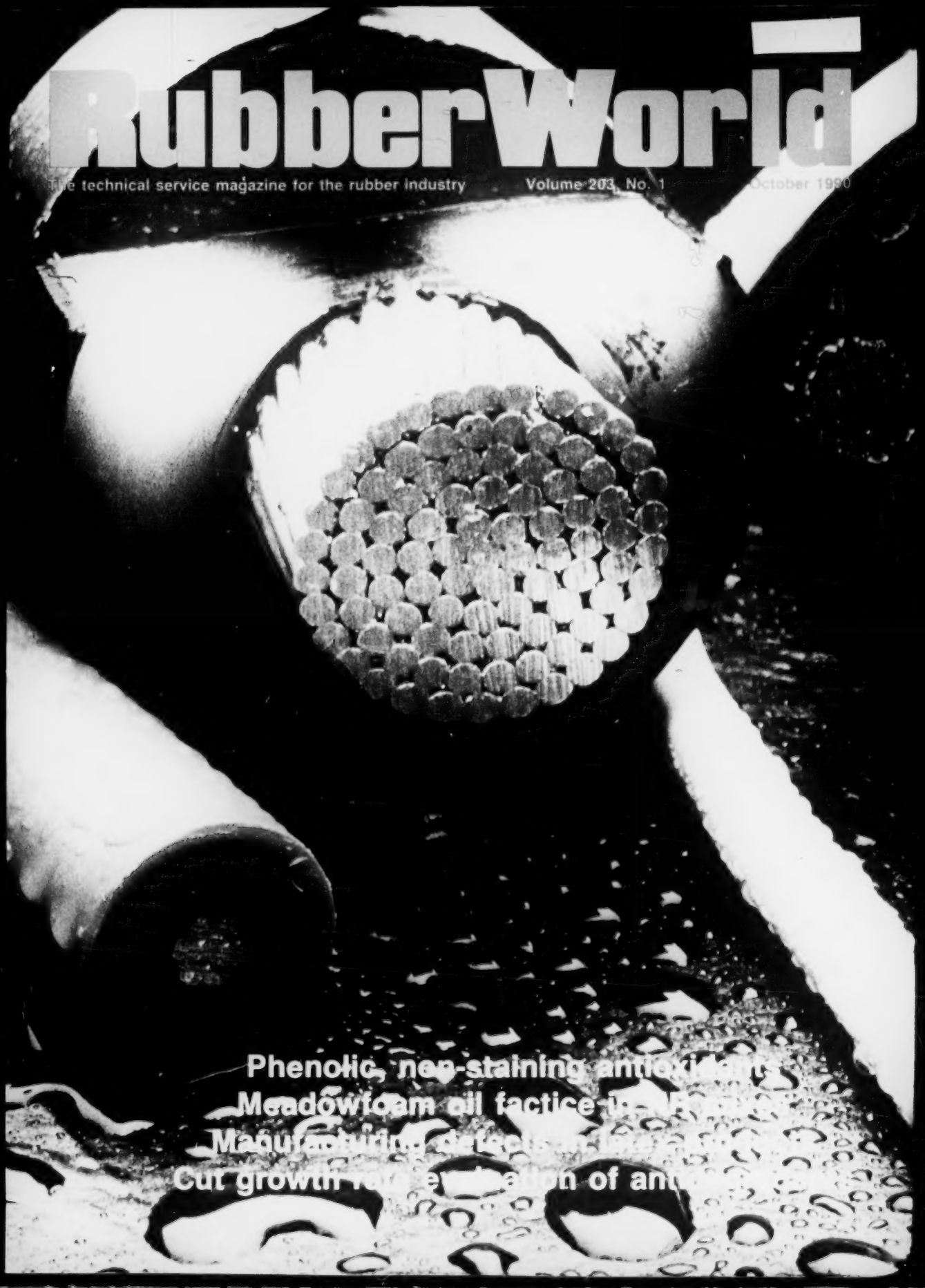
RubberWorld

The technical service magazine for the rubber industry Volume 203, No. 1 October 1990



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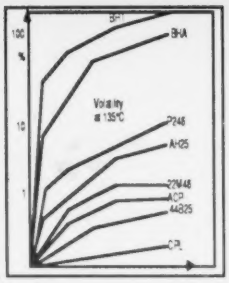

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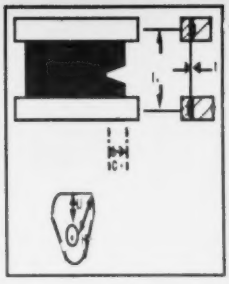

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The Audit Bureau

Editorial

It's too bad that a recent president is no longer in office because he could utter one of his famous sound bites "there you go again" at the end of this. Because once again our form of government is going to practice its version of checks and balances when the current occupant of the White House vetoes the Textile, Apparel and Footwear Trade Act of 1990. It's a similar version of the bills vetoed by his predecessor in 1985 and 1988.

The bill (H.R. 4328) hasn't been vetoed yet, but it will as indicated, and like the two previous measures, it will fall just short of having the veto overriden in Congress. If you need a short civics lesson, more than two-thirds of both houses of the legislative branch of government are needed to overturn a 1-0 vote by the executive branch. Now for a short history lesson. This legislation has been favored by more than 66% of the Senate but just less than 66% of the House. The International Trade Commission has unanimously found need for this legislation at least twice in the past five years.

But this administration argues, just as the previous administration did, that this legislation is bad because it denies the American public the opportunity to buy inexpensive goods. Nothing is mentioned of the fact that without some sort of legislation like this, there will be fewer and fewer people being able to afford the inexpensive items because their jobs have been eliminated.

This bill, like the previous two, does not ask for a rollback on imports. In fact, it allows imports a one percent increase per year based on the previous year's totals. Also, those countries that increase their imports of U.S. agricultural goods would be allowed a higher quota as would the countries that are adversely affected by the measure.

It's unfortunate that a minority can control trade policy at the expense of the domestic industries. We urge you to become more familiar with this legislation and find out how your representatives in Washington are voting. All it's going to take to pass this measure is a switch of a couple of votes. To those attending the Rubber Division meeting in the capital this could be an ideal time to get more information on the legislation by visiting the Fiber, Fabric and Apparel Coalition for Trade or the Footwear Industries of America. Also, you could make a little trip to your representative's office should he/she not be voting the way you feel they should be.

Don R. Smith
Editor

RubberWorld

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RUBBER WORLD, ISSN-0035-9572, October1990 Vol. 203, No.1.

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J.H. Lippincott, John W. Peto, owners. Published monthly with two special issues in the Spring and Fall at 1867 West Market St., Akron, OH 44313 by Lippincott & Peto, Inc. Editorial and Executive Offices at 1867 West Market St., Akron, OH 44313. Second-Class postage paid at Akron, OH and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: please send changes of address to RUBBER WORLD, Circulation Dept., P.O. Box 302, CromPond, NY 10517. Subscription Rates: United States, 1 year $28; Canada, $33; Foreign, $44 in U.S. currency by U.S. bank draft or international money order. Single copies $3.00. October 1990.

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Business Briefs

Acquisitions, expansions

Continental AG, Hanover, West Germany received a proposal from **Pirelli SpA**, Milan, and **Pirelli Tyre Holding N.V.**, Amsterdam, calling for, among other things, the acquisition of Pirelli's tire business by Continental. The proposal is aimed at unifying into Continental the world tire activities of both groups. Continental is reviewing the proposal to determine if it is in the interest of the corporation.

Cabot, the Waltham, MA-based supplier of carbon black has expansion plans set for 1990 that will include a debottlenecking at its Ohio River plant in West Virginia to add 30 million pounds of capacity; expansions in Malaysia, Venezuela and Brazil that will add 54 million lbs., 32 million lbs. and 86 million lbs., respectively; an expansion at Shanghai, China to add 66 million lbs. for rubber applications; an expansion at Kashima, Ibaraki prefecture, Japan that will add 20 million lbs. by 1991 to support special black markets; and an increase scheduled for construction in 1991 at Cilegon, West Java to add 66 million lbs. Cabot will have added 526 million pounds (237,400 metric tons) of capacity to the world's supply in the 1989-1992 period, the company reported. Additional capacity expansions are planned for Eastern Europe.

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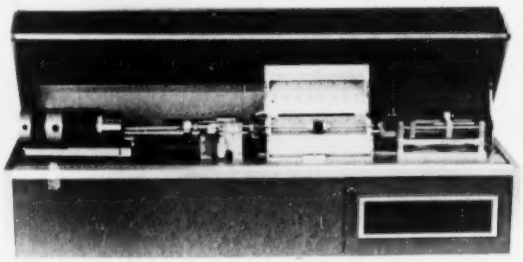
Test System for Rubber Compounds



The MER-1100A MECHANICAL ENERGY RESOLVER is a computerized test system for resolving dynamic moduli and measuring loss tangent. Tests on a small sample can provide data for prediction of rolling resistance and skid resistance of tread stocks, as well as heat build-up in sidewall stocks.

Its concepts let you explore complex properties well into the non-linear viscoelastic region. It provides automatic programming and wide selection of test frequency, displacement, force and temperature. Though versatile, it is simple to operate and affordable.

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Hercules opened a 17,000 square foot technical facility in Jefferson, PA to supply hydrocarbon resins to manufacturers of rubber and engineered plastics. Located within Hercules' hydrocarbon resins plant, the center's capabilities for the rubber industry include synthesizing unique hydrocarbon resins that are compatible with a wide variety of elastomeric polymers for tires, technical rubber goods, and molded and extruded engineered plastics applications.

Columbian Chemicals, Atlanta, GA, opened a $2.25 million European Central Laboratory in Avonmouth, England to serve carbon black customers throughout Europe. Housed in a specially designed 7,500 square foot building adjacent to its Sevalco plant, the laboratory includes state-of-the-art testing instrumentation, a colloidal and analytical department and an applications department to cover all carbon black and rubber applications.

Bridgestone/Firestone acquired majority interest in its Mexican affiliate **Hulera El Centenario, S.A.**, through a purchase from private investors. Based in Mexico City, the affiliate employs 1,100 and manufactures Firestone-brand tires at plants in Mexico City and Cuernavaca, and markets and distributes Firestone and Bridgestone-brand tires throughout Mexico.

Arco's proposed acquisition of the propylene glycol and urethane polyether polyols businesses of **Union Carbide Chemicals and Plastics** has been approved by the **Federal Trade Commission**, based upon several conditions. Arco's

RMA tire report through June (figures in thousands of units)

Passenger tires	YTD '90	YTD '89	% change
Shipments			
original equipment	25,270	28,511	-11.4
radial	22,199	24,893	-10.8
replacement	75,350	74,608	1.0
radial	72,768	70,711	2.9
export	6,694	6,471	3.4
radial	6,368	6,002	6.1
total	107,314	109,589	-2.1
radial	101,335	101,605	-0.3
Production	90,658	93,070	-2.6
radial	86,873	86,646	0.3
Truck & bus tires			
Shipments			
original equipment	3,834	4,598	-16.6
radial	3,259	3,809	-14.4
replacement	17,662	17,178	2.8
radial	11,045	9,945	11.1
export	1,811	1,834	-1.2
radial	1,452	1,373	5.8
total	23,307	23,610	-1.3
radial	15,756	15,126	4.2
Production	19,112	20,273	-5.7
radial	13,597	13,347	1.9

Business Briefs

Water Management Systems Europe business for **W.R. Grace**'s mold release business. The transaction will include a net cash payment to Dexter by Grace and will result in a capital gain for Dexter. The deal is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Grace's mold release business will be merged into Dexter's Adhesives & Structural Materials Division. Dexter's water management systems business will be integrated into Grace's water treatment service in Dearborn, and its process chemicals services.

Dexter signed a letter of intent to purchase the assets of **Moore Plastics** of Cleveland, OH, subject to the execution of a mutually satisfactory purchase and sale agreement. If completed, the business would be operated as part of Dexter's Adhesives & Structural Material Division. Moore Plastics develops preformed sealants for acoustical damping sold primarily to the North American industry. The business will fit comfortably with Dexter's proposed acquisition of **Ciba-Geigy**'s preformed sealants business.

Evode Group p.l.c. of Stafford, England finalized its purchase of **Dexter**'s polyvinyl chloride compounding and extrusion businesses located near Charlotte, NC and other facilities in Newark, NJ and Orlando, FL.

Du Pont's Safety and Environmental Resources unit has developed two consultation programs to help companies identify ways to reduce the generation of waste, and to asses a facility's policies and procedures for regulatory compliance, hazardous waste handling, emergency preparedness or other environmental concerns. The latter program will help the client put the proper systems in place to ensure compliance with the required federal, state and local environmental regulations.

The completion date for **Allied-Signal**'s 35 percent capacity increase at its oxidized high density low molecular weight polyethylene plant has been set for the end of 1990.

Houston, TX-based **Shintech**'s wholly owned subsidiary **K-Bin** has begun a multimillion-dollar expansion of rigid PVC compounds at K-Bin's Freeport, TX, manufacturing facility. The 500% expansion, which will increase capacity from 20 million pounds to more than 100 million pounds per year of rigid PVC compounds, is projected to be on stream by summer of 1991.

Dynisco, Sharon, MA, acquired **Normag Corp.**, a supplier of processing and monitoring equipment and systems for the plastics, rubber and chemical industries. The Hickory, NC company will operate as an independent wholly owned subsidiary of Dynisco, which manufactures instrumentation and testing equipment for the plastics, transportation and test and measurement markets.

Chemie Linz GmbH, Austria, increased capacity to produce levulinic acid for worldwide consumption by 1,200 metric tons at its plant in Linz, Austria. Levulinic acid is an intermediate used in the manufacture of esters, diphenolic acid and other derivatives for the adhesives industry.

Standard Products, Cleveland, OH, purchased through its **Holm Industries** subsidiary, a substantial part of the assets of the Plastic/Magnetic Products Division of **Pantasote**, Greenwich, CT. The business manufactures extruded and molded plastic and magnetic components, and has plants in Seymour, IN; Hartselle, AL; New Ulm, MN; and San Diego, CA. Holm Industries supplies extruded plastic and magnetic door seals. Details of the acquisition were not announced.

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Automotive polymer applications - 1998

(Cars & light trucks made in U.S. & Canada)

Upholstery	346 million lbs.
Fuel systems	187 million lbs.
Electrical	201 million lbs.
Body panels	329 million lbs.
Front/rear end	388 million lbs.
Exterior trim	142 million lbs.
Structural	134 million lbs.
Large functional	999 million lbs.
Small mechanical	276 million lbs.
Flexible	218 million lbs.

Source: Automotive Industries

Business Briefs

Hoechst Celanese will build a polyphenylene sulfide plant in Chatham, NJ, which it will operate as a joint venture with **Kureha Chemical Industry**, of Japan. Scheduled for startup in 1993, the plant will have an initial capacity of 3,000 tons of Fortron PPS which will double by 1995. This will be Hoechst's second PPS plant in the U.S.

Avery's Specialty Tape Division installed a multimillion dollar pilot scale coater/laminator into a specially built addition of its research and development facility in Painesville, OH. The coater/laminator will be used to speed up the product development process for pressure sensitive adhesive products.

JPS Elastomerics formed the Environmental Products Division to expand its product offerings for environmental applications. Renamed from the Containment Membrane Division, it will develop new products as well as support the sales and marketing of existing geomembrane products.

Contracts, licenses

Ford Motor chose **General Tire**'s XP 2000AS all-season high-performance radial tire as original equipment for its Taurus police car. The H-speed rated tire marks the first time that General Tire was awarded business as the standard option on a police vehicle. The XP 2000AS, introduced in 1988, has optimal wet and dry handling.

A reciprocal information-sharing arrangement has been formed between **Footwear Industries of America** (FIA) and the **Shoe Manufacturers Association of Canada** (SMAC). Terms of the arrangement allow each association to use the other's collection service to collect accounts in the other's country; allows each to attend the other's conferences, workshops and seminars at member prices; and allows each to obtain the other's publications at member prices.

Jefferson Rubber Works, Worcester, MA, was awarded a multimillion dollar contract by **Harvard Industries/ Kingston-Warren** to produce rubber components for a new **General Motors** body style for the 1992 models. The contract will require the company to increase the work force when production begins in mid-1991.

Reed Plastics, a division of **Sandoz Chemical** headquartered in Holden, MA, appointed **General Polymers** as exclusive distributor for the entire line of Reed engineered concentrates in Puerto Rico. The agreement includes all Reed color and additive concentrate lines.

Firestone Building Products selected **G.W. Schuh Associates**, O'Fallon, MO, to represent the Firestone modified bitumen product line in the St. Louis market.

Dexter Adhesives & Structural Materials Division selected **Hanil Advanced Materials** of Seoul, Korea as manufacturer's representative for Hysol Aerospace Products.

Estimated polymer usage in U.S. automotive OEM

Polymer Material (millions of lbs.)	1991	1996
Nylon	208	240
Polyethylene	143	169
Polypropylene	400	465
Unsaturated polyester	203	223
Epoxy	4	5
Polyurethane foam	200	225
Polycarbonate	61	66
Thermoplastic elastomers	115	133
Others	48	67

Source: Automotive Industries

Corporate, financial news

American Biltrite reported net earnings of $682,000 on sales of $40.18 million for the second quarter. For the first half of the year, net earnings were $1.2 million on sales of $80.91 million.

Dunlop Tire's medium truck radial tire manufacturing facility in Buffalo, NY is matching company expectations

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